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ABSTRACT

This book provides an overview of the history, present circumstances, and future prospects of the native languages of Quebec: Abenaki, Algonquin, Atikamekw, Cree, Inuktitut, Micmac, Mohawk, Montagnais, and Naskapi. Chapter 1, "The Situation of Aboriginal Languages in the Americas" (Jacques Maurais), discusses the linguistic demography of American Indian languages, language endangerment and extinction, the history of language repression, legal protections, socioeconomic and educational characteristics of Aboriginal speakers, and potential solutions for language maintenance. Chapter 2, "The Aboriginal Languages of Quebec, Past and Present" (Louis-Jacques Dorais), examines the language families (Eskimo-Aleut, Iroquoian, and Algonquin) of Quebec's nine Native languages; their history; present geographic distribution of the nine languages; and details of language usage and education. Chapter 3, "Aboriginal Language Policies of the Canadian and Quebec Governments" (Francois Trudel) describes government policies on Native education since 1867 and government actions supporting language preservation since the 1980s. Chapter 4, "The State of the Art in Linguistic Research, Standardisation and Modernisation in Quebec Aboriginal Languages" (Lynn Drapeau), describes linguistic resources developed for the nine languages, including serial publications, dictionaries, other reference works, conferences, writing systems, and teaching manuals and materials. Chapter 5 presents grammatical sketches of Mohawk (Marianne Mithun), Montagnais (Danielle Cyr), and Inuktitut (Ronald Lowe). Chapter 6 contains the comments of Aboriginal speakers on the future of their languages: Algonquin (Molly Kistabish), Atikamekw (Marthe Coocoo), Cree (James Bobbish), Huron (Linda Sioui), Inuktitut (Taamusi Qumaq), Micmac (Romeo Labillois), Mohawk (Myra Cree), Montagnais (Marcelline Picard-Canape), and Naskapi (Agnes Mackenzie, Bill Jancewitz). Chapter 7, "The Aboriginal Languages in the Perspective of Language Planning" (Lynn Drapeau, Jean-Claude Corbeil), discusses language maintenance strategies for families, communities, and schools. (Contains an extensive bibliography and an index.) (SV)